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TOP SECRET

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Washington

February 22, 1951

Dear Mr. Matthews:

I refer to your 11 December 1950 letter regarding Egyptian Base Facilities.

In regard to the military importance of base rights and facilities desired by the United States in Egypt, it is the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in which I concur, "that their acquisition ALONE is not important enough to United States security to warrant the expenditure of any considerable amount of United States funds beyond those which would be required to construct, maintain, and operate these bases if acquired."

In regard to maintaining the present British position in Egypt, I concur in the Joint Chiefs of Staff opinion "that a continuation of this position is of very great military importance to the United States." From the military point of view, therefore, the Department of Defense is prepared to pay the following "price":

a. Consideration of the inclusion of Egypt in the Mutual Defense Assistance Program, at such time as the fulfillment of higher priority commitments will permit.

b. Collaboration as appropriate in military planning for the mutual Defense of the three nations.

c. Consideration of Egyptian requests for expansion of existing quotas in United States Service Schools for training officers of the Egyptian Armed Forces.

While I have indicated above that United States base rights are not in themselves of pressing importance, nevertheless, I consider that if a tripartite treaty could be successfully negotiated for all or part of the "price" quoted above, base rights and facilities desired by the United States in Egypt should be included in the package, or, at least, that the Egyptians should make a firm commitment for United Kingdom base rights and that United States forces would be allowed to use the United Kingdom bases.

Sincerely yours,

S/

Robert A. Lovett
Acting Secretary

Honorable H. Freeman Matthews
Deputy Under Secretary of State

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY V WOLF JR

DATE 25/82

FOR XDS EXT: DATE

AUTH.

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